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United Nations Forum on Forests
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Item 4 (f) of the provisional agenda*
Common items for each session: monitoring, assessment and reporting

A format for voluntary reporting to the United Nations Forum on Forests at its third session

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

In response to decision 2/1 of the United Nations Forum on Forests, its secretariat developed a suggested format to serve as a basis for countries to use in reporting to the Forum at its third session on their implementation of the relevant Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action. The Forum may wish to consider whether the approach used for the suggested format is useful and also suitable for future sessions.

* E/CN.18/2003/1.

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1. In its decision 2/1, the United Nations Forum on Forests requested its secretariat to develop a suggested format to serve as a basis for countries to use in reporting to the Forum at its third session on their implementation of the relevant Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) proposals for action.

2. The secretariat of the Forum, in collaboration with the member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, has prepared a suggested format and accompanying guidelines for reporting (see annex). In preparing the format for voluntary national reports, the secretariat drew upon the experience and lessons learned from other processes, such as national reporting to the Commission on Sustainable Development. It attempted to develop a simple and streamlined format that provided countries with both a useful structure and sufficient flexibility.

3. In November 2002, the format was sent to all permanent missions to the United Nations, for forwarding to the appropriate in-country office. At the same time, copies of the letter, format and guidelines were sent to all the Forum national focal points that had been officially designated to date.

4. The format requested information on the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action on the elements under discussion at the third session of the Forum, namely: (a) economic aspects of forests, (b) forest health and productivity, and (c) maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs.

5. As of 20 February 2003, 21 countries had submitted reports, which provided useful information for the preparation of the Secretary-General's reports on the three elements mentioned above.

6. A country-led initiative in support of the Forum, on the theme "Monitoring, assessment and reporting on lessons learned in the assessment of the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action", was held from 17 to 20 March 2003 in Viterbo, Italy. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Italy, co-sponsored by the Governments of Brazil, China, Italy, Japan, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America, with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Forum secretariat. A report on the initiative will be before the Forum.

7. At its first session, the Forum stressed the importance of using regional and national criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management as a basis for reporting on sustainable forest management. To that end, the International Conference on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management: The Way Forward was convened in Guatemala City from 3 to 7 February 2003.

Points for discussion

8. The Forum may wish to consider whether the approach used for the suggested format for voluntary reporting for the third session is useful and also suitable for future sessions.

9. The Forum may also wish to consider the format in the context of the proposed establishment of an ad hoc expert group on monitoring, assessment and reporting and the outcome of the two related meetings mentioned in paragraphs 6 and 7 above.

Annex

Proposed format for voluntary national reports

National Report to the Third Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests

Insert **Name of country**

Insert **Date**

I. Key Contacts

Head of Forestry in [insert name of the country]:

Name: [insert name of the person responsible for forests in the country]

Title: [insert title of the person]

Contact information:
Address: [insert information]
Phone: [insert information]
Fax: [insert information]
E-mail: [insert information]

UNFF national focal point for [insert name of the country]:

Name: [insert name of the UNFF focal point for the country, if already designated]

Title: [insert title of the UNFF focal point for the country]

Contact information:
Address: [insert information]
Phone: [insert information]
Fax: [insert information]
E-mail: [insert information]

Person to contact concerning the national report, if other than the UNFF national focal point:

Name: [insert name of the contact person]

Title: [insert title of the contact person]

Contact information:
Address: [insert information]
Phone: [insert information]
Fax: [insert information]
E-mail: [insert information]

II. Progress and issues related to implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action

General

1. Please provide additional or new information on initiatives taken or lessons learned further to the information on forests included in your national reports to the Commission on Sustainable Development[1] on the following points:

- assessment (including of the relevance, priority, status of implementation, planned actions) of the IPF/IFF proposals for action in the national context
- development and implementation of your national forest programme or similar national policy framework for forests, and
- mechanisms or initiatives to facilitate stakeholder participation in forest sector planning, decision-making and/or forest management.

Economic aspects of forests, including trade

2. Please provide information on: i) activities undertaken in your country, ii) progress made, iii) lessons learned, iv) constraints encountered (including those related to financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and needs for capacity-building) and v) initiatives planned and vi) the role of enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination to facilitate progress in:

- valuation of forest goods and services (this may include, among other things, the development and use of new valuation methodologies, valuation of a wider range of goods and services, and policy decisions that reflect a more comprehensive assessment of forest values)
- the amount, scope, or quality of market data and information for wood and non-wood forest products and their substitutes
- use of economic and policy instruments to facilitate progress toward sustainable forest management (these may include improved tax policies and forest revenue collection systems).

3. Please provide information on i) initiatives taken, ii) progress made, iii) lessons learned, iv) constraints encountered (including those related to financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and needs for capacity-building) and v) initiatives planned, and vi) the role of enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination to facilitate progress related to trade in forest products or environmental services (e.g. carbon trading), including in:

- efforts to reduce negative impacts of trade,
- participation in forest certification and labeling schemes and work toward mutual recognition and comparability of such schemes, and
- efforts to reduce illegal trade (exports from or imports into your country) in wood or non-wood forest products. Please indicate achievements made, lessons learned, constraints encountered, and planned initiatives.

Forest health and productivity

4. If damage to forests from air pollution is a significant problem in your country, please provide information on recent national strategies or programmes to minimize damaging air pollution. Please indicate if your country is involved in any international cooperation efforts aimed at strengthening scientific knowledge, increasing information access or reducing the impacts of long-range air pollution on forests, as well as your views on the role of enhanced cooperation at the regional and international levels to facilitate such work.

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[1] For further explanation, please refer to "content" in section 6 of the "Guidelines for the Preparation of Voluntary National Reports to the Third Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests", attached above. The most recent information on forests submitted to the CSD by most countries is in their "Country Profile". The text, on CD Rom and in hard copy, has been distributed along with these guidelines to each country.

Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs

5. Please indicate progress made and lessons learned in efforts to harmonize or to make compatible policy frameworks in your country (e.g. national forest programme or a similar policy framework for forests, biodiversity strategies and action plans, national action plans to combat desertification, etc.) that collectively address the full range of forest values.

6. Please provide information on recent efforts to assess long-term trends in national supply and demand for wood, non-wood forest products and services and whether your country's national forest programme or similar policy framework for forests takes into consideration future needs for forest goods and services. Please provide views on how enhanced cooperation at the regional and international levels, including through UNFF, could further facilitate implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

Other information and emerging issues

7. Please provide any additional relevant information on the implementation of proposals for action or emerging issues[2] related to: i) economic aspects of forests, ii) forest health and productivity, or iii) maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs.

III. Preparation of the Report

8. Describe the process of preparing this report, including which government agencies and stakeholder groups were involved, and the extent to which they contributed. Provide information on challenges encountered and lessons learned in the preparation of this report.

[2] "Emerging issues" refer to issues that have not been addressed by UNFF but that are related to UNFF "elements". For example, some countries may consider forest fires and forest pests and diseases as important emerging issues for the UNFF to address under the UNFF element, forest health and productivity. Kindly limit the emerging issues to three per UNFF element addressed by this report.

Annex 1 (of proposed format for voluntary national reports to UNFF 3)

Indicative summary of IPF/IFF proposals for action relevant to each of the three substantive issues on the agenda of the third session of UNFF

This summary of IPF/IFF proposals for action related to economic aspects of forests, forest health and productivity, and maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs builds upon work initiated by the Program on Forests (PROFOR) at the World Bank and the Government of Australia. The summary of actions is provided for illustrative purposes only. Countries are urged to refer to the full text of the proposals for action as provided in the reports of IPF 4 (E/CN.17/1997/12) and IFF 4 (E/CN.17/2000/14).

UNFF 3 substantive issue	Type of action called for	IPF Proposal(s) for action	IFF Proposal(s) for action
Economic aspects of forests	Valuation of forest goods and services	58h, 104a, 104b	107a, 107b, 107c, 107d
	Data and information on prices and markets for forest products		41e, 121d, 122e
	Full-cost internalization of wood and non-wood forest products and services	58b(iv), 134a, 134b	41c, 41d, 64h, 122f
	Development and use of economic and policy instruments and forest revenue collection systems to increase rent capture and promote sustainable forest management	70b	115a, 115b, 115c, 115d, 115e, 115f, 115g, 122b, 122d
	Market and trade on forest products	128a, 128b, 128c, 131a, 131b, 132a, 132b, 133a, 133b, 133c, 133d, 133e, 133f, 133g, 135a, 135b	41a, 41b, 41e, 41f, 41g, 64i

UNFF 3 substantive issue	Type of action called for	IPF Proposal(s) for action	IFF Proposal(s) for action
Forest health and productivity	Adopt a preventative approach to the reduction of damaging air pollution	IPF 50a	
	Strengthen international cooperation in strengthening related scientific knowledge and information access and in reducing long-range air pollution	IPF 50b, IPF 50e	
	Develop national and regional programmes for monitoring air pollution and provide factual information about transboundary air pollution	IPF 27c, IPF 50c, IPF 50d	
Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs	Assess and meet long-term trends in supply and demand for wood through sustainable forest management policies within and between the public and private sectors (including Incorporate supply of fuelwood and wood energy as well as efficient wood energy technologies in policy development)	28 (a) 58b (i)	122 (a) 122 (b) 122 (d) 122 (c)
	Develop and implement strategies for the protection of the full range of forest values, including cultural, social, spiritual, environmental and economic aspects; particularly biological diversity, indigenous needs and planning and management on an ecosystem basis		85 (b)
	Improve data collection and information dissemination on forest resources, both wood and non-wood forest products and services		121 (b) 121 (c)